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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/755,254	01/04/2001	William Joshua Price	M-8504 US	5201
32566	7590	03/12/2004	EXAMINER	
PATENT LAW GROUP LLP			CHANG, ERIC	
2635 NORTH FIRST STREET			ART UNIT	
SUITE 223			PAPER NUMBER	
SAN JOSE, CA 95134			2116	

DATE MAILED: 03/12/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/755,254

Applicant(s)

PRICE, WILLIAM JOSHUA

Examiner

Eric Chang

Art Unit

2116

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 January 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 04 January 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

**DETAILED ACTION**

1. Claims 1-26 are pending.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claim 23 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 23 recites "a third switch" in lines 4-5 of the claim; however the antecedent basis for "a third switch" has already been established in claim 19, upon which claim 23 depends.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent U.S. Patent 6,260,079 to White, in view of U.S. Patent 4,220,876 to Ray.

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6. As to claim 1, White discloses a device comprising a controller powered by a voltage circuit and coupled to an internal bus [FIG. 10, and col. 15, lines 38-56]. White teaches that a plurality of such devices may further be coupled to an external SCSI bus [FIG. 5, elements 513-515 and 518]. Therefore, White teaches a first device comprising a first controller powered by a first voltage circuit and coupled to a first bus, and a second device comprising a second controller powered by a second voltage circuit and coupled to a second bus, substantially as claimed, and that the two devices are further coupled to an external bus.

White teaches all of the limitations of the claim but does not teach that a first switch is coupled between the buses to decouple the first and second buses when a voltage falls below a predetermined threshold.

Ray teaches a switch operative to decouple a device from a bus when a voltage falls below a predetermined threshold [Abstract]. When an un-powered device taught by White is decoupled from the external bus using the teachings of Ray, the internal bus of the un-powered device is thereby decoupled from the internal buses of other devices on the external bus, substantially as claimed.

At the time that the invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to employ the bus decoupling means as taught by Ray. Ray teaches that one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so that the loss of power, either intentional or accidental, to a device on the bus would not affect the electrical load on the bus [col. 1, lines 35-57].

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of the cited references because they are both directed to the problem of providing resilient and

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fault-tolerant performance for devices on a bus. Moreover, the bus decoupling means taught by Ray would improve the robustness of White because it electrically isolates un-powered devices, thereby preventing bus performance degradation and a concomitantly negative impact on the operation of other devices on the bus.

7. As to claims 2-4, 6-8, 10-13, 15-18, 20-22 and 24-26, White discloses a bus coupled to a first plurality of elements, including at least one of a temperature sensor, a memory, a backplane controller, a port bypass circuit, an I/O expansion slots for disk drives, and at least one power supply [col. 20, lines 64-67, and col. 21, lines 1-26]. It would further be well known to one of ordinary skill in the art that a battery can be used as a power supply, substantially as claimed.

8. As to claims 5, 9, 14, 19 and 23, White discloses devices comprising a controller powered by a first voltage circuit and coupled to an internal bus. Ray discloses a switch operable to decouple devices from an external bus, and the internal buses of said devices from each other when the voltage output from a power circuit falls below a predetermined threshold. Because White and Ray teach that the buses coupled to a controller may be decoupled when the voltage output from a power circuit falls below a predetermined threshold, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that White and Ray further teach that any number of buses coupled to a controller may likewise be decoupled by such switch means. Therefore, White and Ray teach a second, third and fourth switch for decoupling a third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh bus coupled to controllers, substantially as claimed.

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***Conclusion***

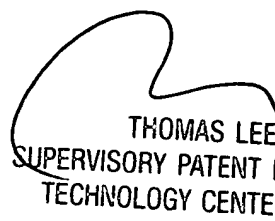
9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Eric Chang whose telephone number is (703) 305-4612. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:00-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas Lee can be reached on (703) 305-9717. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

March 1, 2004

ec

  
THOMAS LEE  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100